HIS KEEN EYES SEE THROUGH EVEN WESTERN ART.

CHAPTER 13
LIKE LAS MENINAS (PART 1)

ART BY ICHIHA AKIZUKI
WRITTEN BY MAI MOCHIZUKI
CHARACTER DESIGNS BY
SHIZU YAMAUCHI

Fall is such a lovely season.

Pleasant tempera-tures, clear blue skies...

The leaves start to turn,

painting the old city of Kyoto in new colors.

This is the time of year for sweets made from chestnuts and sweet potatoes.

In other words...

There's the cornucopia of autumn Kyoto crops, too.

Kyoto is in prime tourism season.

THE SHOP IS AS QUIET AS EVER, HUH?

TICK チ

BUT...

TOCK ト

Holmes is going through the books, as usual...

But what's in there that needs so much attention?

!

TIP-TOE
TIP-TOE

IS THAT YOUR COURSE-WORK?

SO MY SECRET'S FINALLY OUT...

OH...

I'VE JUST BEEN PRETENDING TO GO OVER THE BOOKS SO THAT I CAN STUDY.

THE TRUTH IS...

THA-THUMP

WH-WHAT SECRET...?

BUT YOU'RE OVER THERE WORKING SO EARNESTLY...

AND HERE I AM INDULGING MYSELF. IT ISN'T FAIR.

GIGGLE

THAT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU NEED TO HIDE.

IT'S NOT LIKE THAT. THIS IS MY JOB, AFTER ALL.

BUT WE'VE EVEN ASKED YOU TO MIND THE STORE WHEN YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN STUDYING YOURSELF.

I KNOW. WHY DON'T I HELP YOU STUDY TO MAKE UP FOR IT?

HUH?

THAT WAY, NEITHER OF US WILL HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT YOUR GRADES.

HOLMES-SAN IS GOING TO HELP ME STUDY?

A-ARE YOU SURE?

I'D LOVE ...

R-RING

SLUMP hll 7

...

OH, A CUSTOMER.

DO YOU TWO KNOW EACH OTHER?

IT'S BEEN A WHILE, KIYOTAKA-KUN.

WELL, WELL...

YES.

THIS IS YONEYAMA RYOSUKE-SAN, A FORMER COUNTER-FEITER.

NOT THE MOST FLATTERING OF INTRO-DUCTIONS...

Closed

AS ALWAYS, YOUR COFFEE IS DELICIOUS.

THIS MAN IS... A COUNTER-FEITER?

OH, I BROUGHT SOME AJARI MOCHI.

THEY'RE SPLENDID WITH COFFEE, SO LET'S OPEN THEM UP.

THIS WISPY-LOOKING GUY?

YAGASHIRA-SENSEI HELPED ME OUT.

NOW I WORK IN A GALLERY.

NO NEED TO BE SO ON GUARD.

YONEYAMA-SAN WAS A COUNTERFEITER, BUT HE'S GONE STRAIGHT.

YAGASHIRA-SENSEI... YOU MEAN THE OWNER?

GRAND-FATHER IS THE ONE WHO OUTED HIM.

THAT WAS WHY YONEYAMA-SAN FINALLY WASHED HIS HANDS OF THE BUSINESS.

HE'D GET MAD AT ME IF I SAID IT WAS A COMMON STORY...

BUT I STARTED OUT AS AN ART STUDENT.

but I never seemed to get anywhere with it.

I had great confidence in my skill,

"WOW, YOU'RE SO TALEN-TED!"

...well enough that it could be mistaken for the real thing.

He asked me to recreate a painting...

...who was what most would call a bad influence.

While I was struggling, I was approached by a friend...

AS COUNTER-FEITERS GO, HE'S QUITE A CRAFTY ONE.

DON'T BE FOOLED, AOI-SAN.

C-CRAFTY?

SO HE USED YOU TO MAKE COUNTER-FEITS?

FOR INSTANCE, WHEN HE COUNTER-FEITED THE WORK OF A CERTAIN FIFTEENTH CENTURY PAINTER...

WH-WHAT?

HE SCRAPED ALL THE PAINT OFF AND DIS-SOLVED IT...

...SO HE COULD THEN PAINT HIS WORK ON THE SAME CANVAS.

IN ORDER TO CREATE THE FORGERY,

HE FIRST BOUGHT A PIECE BY A NO-NAME PAINTER FROM THE SAME ERA.

THAT WAY, HIS MATERIALS WERE AUTHENTIC TO THE AGE OF THE INTENDED PAINTING.

WHY WOULD HE DO THAT?

DESPITE HIS UNASSUMING APPEARANCE, HE'S ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT KINDS OF COUNTERFEITERS TO DEAL WITH.

...SO THAT THE FINISHED FORGERY PROJECTED NO MALICIOUS INTENT TO DECEIVE.

THEN HE ENTERED A SORT OF TRANCE-LIKE STATE AS HE COPIED THE PAINTER'S WORK...

WOW... I SEE...

THAT CERTAINLY IS... SCRUPULOUS.

I STARTED WANTING PEOPLE TO NOTICE ME.

AS I CONTINUED, LITTLE BY LITTLE,

BUT THAT WAS JUST AT THE START.

YES.

TO NOTICE YOU?

THE REASON I GOT SO INTO COUNTER-FEITING...

...WAS BECAUSE WHEN PEOPLE CONFUSED MY WORK WITH THAT OF A MASTER...

IT FELT LIKE AN ACKNOWLEDG-MENT OF MY SKILL...

"THIS ISN'T BY A FAMOUS PAINTER."

"I PAINTED IT."

...THOUGH IT'S FOOLISH TO SEEK ACKNOWLEDGMENT BY COPYING SOMEONE ELSE'S GREATNESS.

IT WAS YAGASHIRA-SENSEI WHO IMMEDIATELY SAW THROUGH MY SHALLOW-NESS.

GRANDFATHER ACKNOWLEDGED YONEYAMA-SAN'S TALENT...

...AND TOLD HIM THAT IF HE WENT STRAIGHT AND ATONED,

HE WOULD HELP HIM OUT.

AFTER HE IDENTIFIED MY FORGERY,

HE SOUGHT ME OUT.

AND THEN?

IN THAT MOMENT, I FELT LIKE SOMEONE WAS FINALLY SEEING ME.

I WAS SO HAPPY.

SO, YONEYAMA-SAN, WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE TODAY?

OH, THAT'S RIGHT!

I'M NOT SURE HOW TO PUT IT...

I WAS HOPING YOU WOULD APPRAISE SOMETHING FOR ME.

OH, I DON'T HAVE IT WITH ME.

IT'S NOT AN ANTIQUE OR ANY-THING...

?

SLIP

APPRAISE SOME-THING?

I'D BE HAPPY TO.

A PAINTING... YOU DID?

I'D LIKE YOU TO HAVE A LOOK AT A PAINTING I DID.

I'LL START AT THE BEGINNING.

IT WAS SOLD TO AN OLDER GENTLEMAN NAMED TAKAMIYA WHO LIVES IN THE OKAZAKI DISTRICT.

I WAS EXTREMELY PLEASED WITH MY WORK, AND I WANTED TO SEE THE BUYER'S REACTION...

BACK WHEN I WAS STILL COUNTERFEITING...

I WASN'T USUALLY INVOLVED IN THE SELLING,

BUT JUST ONCE, I DECIDED TO WATCH A SALE.

I'M FAMILIAR WITH TAKAMIYA-SAN.

HE'S FAMOUS AS A WEALTHY COLLECTOR OF WESTERN ART.

BUT HE'S EQUALLY KNOWN AS A CAUTIOUS AND DISCERNING MAN.

WHAT EXACTLY DID YOU SELL HIM?

VERMEER'S *THE GUITAR PLAYER.*

I SEE...

HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

YOU REALLY ARE CRAFTY.

HIS *GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING* IS ESPECIALLY FAMOUS.

OH, I KNOW THAT ONE!

JOHANNES VERMEER WAS A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY DUTCH PAINTER.

HE'S KNOWN AS "THE MASTER OF LIGHT" FOR HIS BEAUTIFUL CONTRASTS BETWEEN LIGHT AND DARK.

AND SOLD THEM AS PREVIOUSLY UNDISCOVERED VERMEERS.

A FORGER NAMED VAN MEEGEREN PAINTED PIECES THAT COPIED HIS STYLE ALMOST PERFECTLY,

THERE WAS A FAMOUS COUNTERFEITING INCIDENT CONCERNING VERMEER.

BUT *THE GUITAR PLAYER*, THE PAINTING YONEYAMA-SAN COPIED,

IS A KNOWN WORK BY VERMEER.

BUT RATHER HIS ESSENCE TO CREATE NEW PIECES.

IN OTHER WORDS, VAN MEEGEREN DIDN'T COPY VERMEER'S WORK,

THAT'S WHERE YONEYAMA-SAN'S CRAFTINESS COMES IN.

BUT WOULDN'T PEOPLE NOTICE RIGHT AWAY IF THERE WERE TWO OF THE SAME PAINTING?

SO YOUR PAINTING WAS A COPY OF THE REAL DEAL?

FORTUNATELY, IT WAS RETURNED SAFELY TWO MONTHS LATER.

IN 1974, *THE GUITAR PLAYER* WAS STOLEN.

...SOLD IT USING THAT AS A PITCH.

I SUSPECT THAT YONEYAMA-SAN'S "BAD INFLUENCE" OF A FRIEND...

?

I'M GLAD

...!

"THE GUITAR PLAYER HANGING IN THE GALLERY IS A FAKE PUT OUT TO KEEP UP APPEARANCES."

"THIS IS THE REAL GUITAR PLAYER—THE ORIGINAL THAT WAS STOLEN."

I SEE...

BECAUSE IT WAS STOLEN ONCE BEFORE...

THERE MIGHT BE SOME UNCERTAINTY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO IT.

...

YOU SEE?

CRAFTY, ISN'T IT?

...BUT IT WAS APPARENTLY REVEALED AS A COUNTER-FEIT.

HE BOUGHT IT.

SO, WHAT DID TAKAMIYA-SAN SAY?

小切手

1,000,000※

BUT THE CHECK HE SENT US WAS ONLY FOR ONE MILLION.

WELL, THEY WERE PRETENDING IT WAS A GENUINE VERMEER.

Of course, a counterfeit isn't worth a single yen.

OUR ASKING PRICE WAS 100 BILLION YEN.

O-ONE HUNDRED BILLION?!

AND SENT THAT CHECK IN RECOGNITION OF YOUR SKILL.

HE REALIZED THE PAINTING WAS A FORGERY,

I SEE. TYPICAL TAKAMIYA.

BUT RECENTLY, I WENT TO AN ART WORLD PARTY...

...WHERE I RAN INTO TAKAMIYA-SAN.

AFTERWARD, YAGASHIRA-SENSEI EXPOSED ME...

AND I GAVE UP THE COUNTERFEITING GAME FOR GOOD.

THAT'S QUITE A STORY...

TAKAMI-YA-SAN...

IT'S BEEN A WHILE, YONEYAMA-SAN.

FANCY MEETING YOU HERE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR WONDERFULLY DONE *GUITAR PLAYER.*

INDEED.

THE ART WORLD IS FULL OF MONSTERS, MY GRANDFATHER INCLUDED.

AND THAT INNOCUOUS SMILE OF HIS MADE IT WORSE!

IT REALLY WAS!

HOW SCARY!

SHIVER

SHIVER

SHIVER

SHIVER

BUT HOLMES-SAN, YOU'RE ONE OF THEM!

HUH?

IT CAN BE QUITE TERRIFY-ING.

THEN...

INSIGHTFUL AS EVER, KIYOTAKA-KUN.

YOU GUESSED IT.

...IS SOMETHING TAKAMIYA COMMISSIONED FROM YOU?

THIS PICTURE YOU WANT ME TO LOOK AT...

AND KNOWING THAT, HE SAID TO ME...

"I WANT YOU TO DO ME A FAVOR."

"IF YOU DO, I'LL FORGIVE YOUR CRIME."

ON YAGASHIRA-SENSEI'S ADVICE,

I DON'T HIDE THE FACT THAT I USED TO BE A COUNTER-FEITER.

SO TAKAMIYA-SAN KNEW THAT I WAS THE ONE WHO PAINTED THAT FORGERY.

YES.

HE THEN ASKED...

A... FAVOR?

"MAKE ME A PAINTING LIKE A VELÁZQUEZ."

LIKE VERMEER, DIEGO VELÁSQUEZ IS A FAMOUS SEVENTEENTH CENTURY PAINTER.

VELÁZ-QUEZ?

HE WAS A COURT PAINTER FOR THE KING OF SPAIN AT THE TIME, PHILIP IV.

HE DID SEVERAL PORTRAITS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY AND THOSE CLOSE TO THEM.

ディエゴ・ベラスケス

DESPITE ITS REGALITY AS AN OFFICIAL PORTRAIT,

IT STILL MANAGES TO PORTRAY HER CHILDISHNESS AND WARMTH.

THIS IS A PORTRAIT OF PHILIP IV'S BELOVED DAUGHTER, PRINCESS MARGARITA.

HERE'S *THE SURRENDER OF BREDA.*

YES.

VELÁSQUEZ WAS ALSO EXTRA-ORDINARILY SKILLED WITH COMPOSI-TION.

THE MOST FAMOUS EXAMPLES OF THIS ARE *THE SURRENDER OF BREDA* AND *LAS MENINAS.*

IT WAS
POINTLESS TO
CELEBRATE
THE SPANISH
ARMY'S
VICTORY.

IT
[illegible]
DUTCHMAN'S
SHOULDER AS IF
THANKING HIM.

YOU'RE
RIGHT...

HE WAS
[illegible]
SPANISH
CHIVALRY AND
CIVILITY.

BY
PORTRAYING
THE VICTORY
AS...

...IS
ANOTHER OF
[illegible]

THE
EMOTIONAL
ASPECT OF
[illegible]

YONEYAMA-SAN... YOU'VE ALREADY COMPLETED THE PAINTING, HAVEN'T YOU?

SURELY HE WASN'T ASKING FOR A FORGERY, RIGHT?

SO...

WHAT DID TAKAMIYA-SAN MEAN WHEN HE ASKED FOR A PAINTING LIKE A VELÁSQUEZ?

YES.

I HAD MY OWN IDEAS ABOUT IT...

I THOUGHT I SHOULD BRING ALONG A THIRD PARTY WHO KNEW THE CIRCUM-STANCES AS A MEDIATOR,

SO I ASKED YAGASHIRA-SENSEI ABOUT IT...

BUT WHEN HE SAW THE PAINTING, HE SAID, "YOU SHOULD TAKE KIYOTAKA, NOT ME."

YES.

SO, KIYOTAKA-KUN, WILL YOU PLEASE ACCOMPANY ME?

THE OWNER SAID THAT, DID HE?

AND I'LL ADMIT THAT I'M CURIOUS TO SEE WHAT YOU PAINTED.

CERTAINLY.

I'M SURE MY GRAND-FATHER HAD A REASON FOR RECOMMENDING ME.

OH, AND... AOI-CHAN, WAS IT? WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME, TOO?

ME?

THANK GOOD-NESS!

THE LONE SURVIVOR WAS HIS ONLY GRANDSON.

TAKAMIYA-SAN LOST HIS WIFE, HIS SON, HIS DAUGHTER-IN-LAW, AND HIS FIVE-YEAR-OLD GRANDDAUGHTER SATOKO IN AN ACCIDENT LONG AGO.

THE TRUTH IS...

WELL NOW...

If Satoko-san had lived, she'd be about your age now.

I THINK HAVING YOU THERE WOULD HELP TO KEEP THE PEACE.

SO WHILE I'M NOT EXACTLY ASKING YOU TO STAND IN FOR SATOKO-SAN,

BUT IF YOU WANT TO COME...

I HOPE YOU DON'T FEEL PRESSUR-ED,

Why the owner sent Holmes-san in his stead...

What Takamiya-san meant when he asked for a painting like a Velásquez...

And most of all...

I want to know it all.

Just what kind of painting Yoneyama-san created...

SURE! I'D LOVE TO!

CHAPTER 13
END